

NSC BRIEFING

10 June 1954

INDOCHINA

I. [REDACTED] expectation heavy Viet Minh
delta campaign.

A. Redeployment of Dien Bien Phu battle corps
nearing completion, readiness date put at
20 June.

II. [REDACTED] piecemeal employment of divisions,
rather than mass assault.

A. He foresees infiltration of units, "strangu-
lation" tactics which French could not
counter at Dien Bien Phu.

III. Hanoi would be major prize and is apparently vulnerable.

A. City reportedly has large Viet Minh fifth
column but exact size undetermined; internal
uprisings would facilitate external attacks.
B. Cogy fears inability hold Hanoi, says rather
than have another Dien Bien Phu he would with-
draw to Haiphong if city's communications cut.

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1. [REDACTED] French withdrawal could occur within 30 days, as city dependent on daily supplies of coal for electricity and water filtration system; Hanoi's rice stocks also low.

IV. Prior to all-out enemy delta effort, most military observers expect continued attacks on Hanoi-Haiphong routes and in Phu Ly and Hung Yen sectors in southern delta.

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C. [REDACTED] past week's information gives over-all impression that enemy trying prevent effective French build-up of defensive system while rapidly redeploying its own forces in and around delta for large-scale operations.

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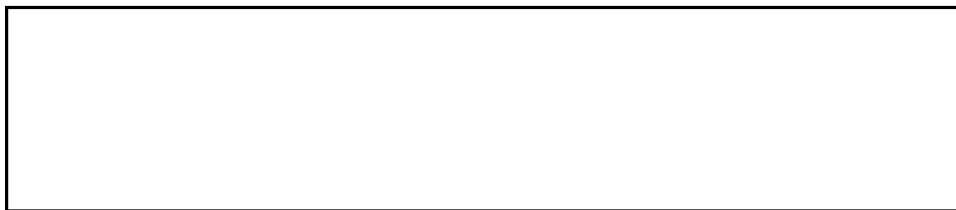
V. Elsewhere in Indochina, further enemy action indicated for northern Laos.

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A.



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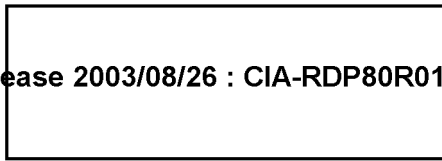
1. French strength this operational sector totals 13 battalions.

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VI.

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VI. Appointment of Ely-Salan team may be indicative of French intention achieve early settlement.

- A. Ely essentially staff officer, not combat commander.
- B. Salan's defensive-mindedness, Maginot mentality were only too apparent when he followed DeLattre as commander in chief.



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C.

[REDACTED]

Salan,

to be Ely's deputy, was assigned not to conduct offensive campaign but to use his knowledge of Indochina in administration of armistice.

D. IN THIS CONNECTION, FRANCE'S NEW MINISTER FOR ASSOCIATED STATES (DUPONT) HAS EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS DIVIDE VIETNAM AT POINT NORTH OF TOURANE (COL DE NUAGES).

(VIII - TRANSITION)

~~THUS INDOCHINA MILITARY SITUATION THIS WEEK IN SECOND PLACE TO POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS ANTICIPATED BOTH AT GENEVA (MOLOTOU SPEECH) AND IN FRANCE (ASSEMBLY DEBATE).~~

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